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Expands choices for local telephone service

Sen. Shafer introduces *Telecommunications Competition Act*

ATLANTA— Sen. David Shafer (R-Duluth) today introduced the *Telecommunications Competition Act* to expand consumer choices for local telephone service.

“Last year we increased competition for the cable television industry by making it easier for telecommunications companies like AT&T to enter the video market,” Sen. Shafer said.



Photo Credit: Senate Press Office

“This legislation further levels the playing field by making it easier for other telecommunications companies to compete with former telephone monopolies like AT&T.”

Senate Bill 408 eliminates the need for telecommunications companies to separately negotiate franchise agreements with each city, a process that takes months, serves as a barrier to competition and

sometimes results in competing companies paying different franchise fees. Instead, the legislation provides for a uniform franchise agreement so that all providers are paying the same fees and are operating on the same terms.

Sen. Shafer said the language of the agreement was a “collaborative effort” by the Georgia Municipal Association and the telecommunications industry.

“I am a strong believer in competition,” Shafer said. “Expanded choices empower the consumer, improve service and keep prices low.”

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Senator David Shafer is Chairman of the Senate Regulated Industries and Utilities Committee. He represents the 48th Senate District which includes parts of Fulton and Gwinnett Counties. He may be reached at 404-656-0048 or via email at David.Shafer@senate.ga.gov.